

A Study to Identify Career Anchors in The National Iranian Oil Company: The Application of a Mixed-Methods Approach

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Highlights

- Halal income: doing rightful and proper work considering what God says
- God satisfaction: doing work for God satisfaction and by relying on God
- Dedication: performing duties without expecting appreciation and by relying on God and his commands

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Abstract

The world is presently witnessing a shift in approach to organizational jobs and structures towards temporary and flat structures. Accordingly, people's careers and how they are managed are changing in organizations. Understanding career anchors as a way to discover self-image and external feedback of behavior can be effective in personal and organizational decisions. This research is an attempt to understand career anchors among the employees of National Iranian Oil Company, which is one of the most important economic organizations in Iran, using a mixed-methods approach. In the qualitative phase, 30 interviews were subjected to content analysis, which resulted in identifying 14 categories. The four categories of career stability, halal income, God satisfaction, and dedication were not observed in the research literature. The reliability of the qualitative data was estimated at 0.853 by William Scott's method. In the quantitative phase, a questionnaire, which was based on the standard CIO2 questionnaire of Schein (1990) and some self-designed questions for the newly identified anchors, was used for data collection from a sample of 200 people. The questionnaire's reliability was estimated by Cronbach's alpha. It was observed that career stability and halal income were the top-ranked career anchors of the studied employees.

Keywords: Career anchor, Career stability, Dedication, God satisfaction, Halal income

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1. Introduction

The mere existence of organizations does not guarantee to achieve welfare, comfort, and full development and supply wellbeing and comfort. The economic power and welfare of any country depend on the optimal use of its facilities, industries, and especially its human resource. The business environment is rapidly changing in the context of technology and global competition. The only certainty is uncertainty. Therefore, organizations make many internal changes to deal with uncertain and

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changing conditions. To be more flexible in responding to environmental factors, the reorganization has recently been considered in organizations. Along with reorganization, xxx, xxx, and flattening of the organizational pyramid, we are witnessing a gradual change in inter-personal and inter-organizational relationships and in career concepts (Brousseau et al., 1996). Therefore, it is of crucial importance to pay attention to the career path of human resources. It is growingly observed that there is no longer much hierarchy to climb in many organizations and the promotion paths to the top level of the organizational hierarchy have become difficult (Peng, 2018) because the definitions of jobs, careers, and job structures have radically transformed in the last twenty years. Widespread downsizing, and resultantly, job insecurity, and organizational loyalty are just some examples of these changes (Marshall & Bonner, 2003). Most studies have addressed the external aspects of careers, such as career paths or xxx. In contrast, scholars in this field state that the internal tendencies of careers should be taken into account and that organizations should adapt the working and organizational conditions to the main elements of internal careers. Understanding the non-monetary incentives of careers is important in determining effective approaches to career development and improvement in the future. According to Derr and Laurent (1989), organizations should analyze career orientations to determine the most appropriate interventions for career orientation. Career paths, which are typically based on the internal anchors of the career, are influenced by external variables and/or the individual's and organization's environment, making it important to consider this hidden factor in developing and improving careers in a rapidly changing world.

Understanding the pillars of careers and recognizing diverse variables influencing them will help organizations develop more successful careers. Organizations need to know different aspects of people's careers to create suitable career paths and reward and motivation systems. Therefore, pluralistic approaches to career management satisfy employees' diverse needs. These approaches enable organizations to reward and retain their workforces' competencies (Pambudi et al., 2019; Erdogmus, 2004). In this paper, the researchers aim to identify the pillars of careers in National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC), one of the most important revenue-generating organizations in Iran. NIOC is one of the few Iranian organizations in which careers and career paths have been defined properly as it has been a part of its human resource management approaches. However, what is important is the fitness of these careers and their components with the human resource policies and strategies. NIOC, as the main company of the Ministry of Oil, which is itself the most important revenue-generating ministry of Iran, plays a remarkable role in the economy and is the main source of the economic system. So, it is essential to know what the dimensions of the internal careers of the people in the statistical population of the research are.

A basic model for understanding people's internal careers is the career anchor theory. Schein (1978) states that people's life experiences give them a fixed and precise self-concept of the career, which he called career anchor (Danziger et al., 2008). The concept of 'self' is composed of three components:

1. The individual's perception of her capabilities and talents (based on real achievements in different work settings)
2. The individual's perception of her motivations and needs (based on chances for testing and recognizing oneself in real settings and getting feedback from others)
3. Perceptions of one's attitudes and values (based on the real confrontation between the self and the organization and work setting's norms and values) (Erdogmus, 2004).

Schein views career anchor as an element in the individual's self-concept that is not given up even in the face of hard choices (Danziger et al., 2008). According to Schein, when people find consistency between their work and their career anchor, they will most likely get the positive outputs of their careers, such as job effectiveness, satisfaction, and stability. Nonetheless, since people do not always have jobs that are compatible with their career anchor, there are great variances in people's job outputs. In general, people whose jobs are compatible with their career anchors are more likely than those that have failed to achieve this compatibility to achieve higher career outputs (Danziger et al., 2008).

The underlying assumption of Schein's theory of career anchor is that an individual can have only one career anchor, which may not change after it has been created. It is stated that people seek job opportunities that can strengthen their career anchors in lieu of weakening them (Ituma & Simpson, 2006). Schein (1978) based his early theory of career on the assumption that a career anchor remains relatively fixed during the career, whereas others have argued that people may have primary and secondary career anchors or their career anchors may change over time (Feldman & Bolino, 1996; Yarnall, 2008; Yarnall, 1998).

An important point to consider regarding Schein's theory of career anchor is that although many researchers in subsequent studies have tried to refute it, it has been established that Schein's original typology is firm and robust. Researchers (Barth, 1993; Bonner, 1997; Hopkins, 1976; McLees, 1988; Pawel, 1991) have considered certain professions and have adopted various methodologies in their research on career anchor (Marshall & Bonner, 2003).

Based on a study at MIT, Schein (1978) recognized five service anchors for career promotion. Following extensive research, he added three other anchors to this list in 1985. These eight anchors include:

- Technical/functional competencies: stimulated by work content
- General management competencies: via opportunity for analyzing and solving complicated conceptual problems
- Security and stability: long-term dependence
- Entrepreneurial creativity: interest in project launching and management
- Autonomy and independence: maximum freedom of action (Schein, 1974)
- Sense of service: with certain values in relation to society style
- Pure challenge: coping with barriers in solving organizational problems and winning competitors
- Lifestyle (identity): balance with lifestyle and such issues as maternal behavior or employee care (Ismail and Ramly, 2011)

In another investigation into the theory of career anchor, DeLong (1979) provided a career orientation list for measuring and analyzing Schein's anchor model. DeLong's main motive was beyond adopting an empirical approach to evaluating Schein's model. He added the anchor of identity to Schein's theory and defined it as the person's sense of identity towards the situation and status of the company/organization (DeLong, 1982).

Herr's (1986) study was very influential on the theory of career anchors/orientations. In this research on 154 US Navy officers, he expanded Schein's theory of career anchors. The officers had been selected from the staff and line of five departments. They were, on average, 31.6 years old with an average of 9.93 years of career in the Navy. In his subsequent studies, he addressed other profession groups such as scientists and engineers of Honeywell and development experts of a bank. His main study focused

on multinational executives conducted in Europe to establish the intercultural validity of this concept as one of the different career orientations. He found that only 62 percent of the Navy officers intended to grasp senior management positions, and others desired other positions (Derr, 1986). He enumerated five career orientations as (i) getting ahead, (ii) getting secure, (iii) getting high, (iv) getting free, and (v) getting balanced (Erdogmus, 2004; Dugan et al., 1998).

2. Methodology

Step 1. Development of interview protocol and questions

First, the theoretical literature of the research was preliminarily reviewed in the field of internal career anchors. The initial output was the basic dimensions of a career. Another output of the literature review was the development of the interview protocol and questions. These questions aimed to extract internal career anchors in the statistical population, i.e., NIOC. Just as Schein's internal career anchors were accepted and used as the basis of the research, the interview protocol was based on Schein (1990) and Ituma and Simpson (2007). The following questions were developed for the interview:

1. What changes have you had in your job or organization?
2. How did this change happen? What motivated you?
3. How do you feel about the change? How does the change relate to your goals?
4. When you look at your career and life so far, can you describe the times you enjoyed (or did not enjoy)? What made it enjoyable (not enjoyable)?
5. When you look at the future of your career, what do you expect and what do you want to avoid?
6. What is the most important and nonnegotiable career requirement for you when you are deciding on your career?

Step 2. Data collection

At this stage, 30 people were selected for interview by nonprobability sampling. From the 20th interview onwards, we observed repetitions in the information provided. However, we continued until the 30th interview whose data were found to be completely repetitive, so the interviews reached saturation. In other words, sampling continued as long as the participant could not add any other complementary point to the constituents of career dimensions. Each interview took 15-60 minutes depending on the individual's desire. Table 1 presents some demographic data of the interviewees.

Table 1

A brief description of the interviewees

Position	Number	Educational level			Experience (years)				Gender	
		B.Sc.	M.Sc.	Ph.D.	<10	10-15	15-20	>20	Female	Male
Manager	5	1	1	3	-	-	2	3	1	4
Deputy	5	1	2	2	-	2	2	1	2	3
Head of an office	10	3	4	3	1	4	3	2	3	7
Expert	10	3	5	2	7	2	1	-	4	6

Step 3. Data open-coding

At this stage, the interviews, which amounted to about 35 pages, were open-coded. The process was initiated with the following three guiding questions: What event does the data represent? What category does this event represent? What event happens in these classifications?

The researcher asked herself these questions continuously during the comparison, coding, and analysis. With this process, the mass of information collected was summarized as is seen in Appendix. As such, the anchors were coded from 1 to 14, the concepts were coded from 1 to 38, and the interviews were coded from DN1 to DN30 from the right to the left. In total, 144 statements were separated.

In total, 14 categories were identified in the interviews as the final categories and career anchors in NIOC. They include geographical stability, economic stability, being challenging, freedom of action, life-career balance, creativity and innovation, managerial competencies, functional competencies, honest service to others, identity, career stability, halal income, God satisfaction, and dedication.

Step 4. Measurement of the model's validity or qualitative data's reliability

At this stage, the reliability of the data was measured using William Scott's method. So, 10 percent of the statements were selected by the systematic sampling technique. Then, a second rater was asked to code them (Table 1). Then, a comparison was made between the two raters to find out the extent of agreement.

Table 2
Re-coding

Sr. No.	Coding by the researcher		Re-coding		Agreement (+) Disagreement (-)
	Anchor code	Concept code	Anchor code	Concept code	
1	1	1	1	1	+
11	2	4	2	7	-
21	2	6	2	6	+
31	3	9	3	9	+
41	4	12	4	12	+
51	4	13	4	13	+
61	5	16	5	16	+
71	6	19	6	19	+
81	7	22	7	22	+
91	8	24	8	24	+
101	9	27	9	27	+

111	11	31	11	31	+
121	11	32	11	33	-
131	12	34	12	34	+
141	14	38	14	38	+

After the codes were compared, the number of agreements was summed, which yielded 13 agreements out of 15 cases, showing an agreement rate of 86.6 percent. This figure shows “the percentage of observed agreement” or P_0 . Now, the expected agreement percentage, P_e , could be calculated by Eq. (1) as follows:

$$P_e = \sum_i^k p_i^2 = \sum_i^{36} p_i^2 = (0.042)^2 + (0.125)^2 + (0.076)^2 + \dots + (0.042)^2 + (0.049)^2 = 0.910 \quad (1)$$

The result is, then, put in Eq.(2) .

$$\pi = \frac{P_0 - P_e}{1 - P_e} = \frac{0.866 - 0.0910}{1 - 0.0910} = 0.853 \quad (2)$$

Since 0.853 is greater than 0.7, we can say that the anchors and concepts are valid.

Step 5. The quantitative phase

People’s internal career anchors were studied with the items provided by Schein (1990) in the CIO2 questionnaire. Cronbach’s alpha was estimated at 0.821 for the distribution of the initial sample. For the four newly identified anchors, a self-designed questionnaire whose Cronbach’s alpha was 0.801 was used. Finally, the questionnaire was completed by a sample of 200 people in NIOC. The career anchors were ranked with the Friedman test and based on demographic variables (gender and educational level). The results are presented in Table 3.

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Table 3

The results of the Friedman test for the career anchors based on the demographic variables

Anchor	Mean rank	Gender		Educational level					Education type			
		Female	Male	Diploma	Associate degree	Bachelor's degree	Master's degree	Ph.D. or higher	Non-technical & non-medical	Semi-technical	Technical	Medical & healthcare
Halal income	13.41	13.28	13.46	13.75	13.55	13.44	13.45	13.05	13.36	13.52	13.45	13.31
God satisfaction	6.38	6.82	6.21	8.30	6.35	5.68	6.98	6.83	6.57	5.67	6.31	6.72
Dedication	5.40	5.45	5.38	4.35	6.25	6.00	4.88	4.23	5.66	6.17	5.28	4.03
Diversity and being challenging	4.64	3.98	4.87	1.00	1.95	4.06	6.22	6.75	4.02	4.71	4.98	5.42
Freedom of action	4.90	5.01	4.86	4.50	4.35	4.94	4.80	5.43	4.54	4.50	5.15	5.64
Economic stability	8.54	8.78	8.45	10.90	9.58	8.70	7.91	7.63	8.98	8.19	8.42	7.72
Geographical stability	1.39	1.50	1.35	3.10	1.72	1.42	1.10	1.02	1.57	1.29	1.29	1.31
Creativity and innovation	8.84	7.71	9.26	3.95	4.95	8.37	10.94	11.02	7.70	10.12	9.20	10.36
Managerial competencies	3.86	4.53	3.62	10.30	7.45	3.46	2.15	3.35	5.01	2.83	3.20	3.50
Functional competencies	10.94	10.65	11.04	6.45	10.65	10.96	11.51	11.62	10.72	11.14	11.03	11.11
Career-life balance	10.49	10.97	10.31	11.45	11.38	11.07	9.48	9.50	10.66	10.33	10.50	9.89
Identity	6.69	6.56	6.74	9.30	7.95	7.14	6.27	4.33	7.34	6.36	6.35	6.06
Honest service	6.02	6.32	5.91	5.85	5.45	6.22	5.76	6.32	5.46	6.69	6.29	6.28
Career stability	13.50	13.43	13.53	11.80	13.42	13.54	13.55	13.92	13.41	13.48	13.55	13.67

Number	200	53	147	10	20	90	50	30	74	21	87	18
Chi-square	1.961	501.1	1.472	112.5	218.6	931.0	563.7	335.3	700.4	225.4	885.5	186.0
df	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000



Results and discussion

The internal identity, which is a career anchor, is created and adopted by experiences and external practices. The career anchor of self-image and self-assessment is based on abilities, talents, competencies, attitudes, emotions, motivations, needs, and ambitions. In this attitude to the career, the person discovers her career anchor by observing herself and getting external feedback on her behavior in real situations. The career anchor refers to the person's perception of her talents, values, and motivations, which shape her career decisions (Erdogmus, 2004). Schein (1990) states that people's life experiences give them a fixed and precise career self-concept, which is their career anchor (Danziger et al., 2008).

As already mentioned, this research identified 14 categories as career anchors. By comparing the statements mentioned in the interviews and the concepts extracted, ten anchors out of the 14 anchors had already been presented by previous researchers. The anchors of being challenging, managerial competencies, freedom of action, career-life balance, creativity, functional competencies, and sense of service were mentioned by Schein (1990). The anchors of economic stability and geographical stability found here correspond to security and stability in Schein (1990). The anchor of identity was also enumerated by DeLang (1979). In addition to these anchors, some interviewees also emphasized concepts like career stability, halal income, God satisfaction, dedication, religious ethical principles, and the Hereafter and its significance for the career path so that they stated that working in the organization would depend on them. Among these concepts, the last three concepts are rooted in religious beliefs.

The concept of career stability means stability in the career path in a series of jobs that are in the same occupational group in terms of technical content and field of activities.

Regarding the next three concepts, a search in Islamic texts reveals the significance of halal income, God satisfaction, and dedication. If a work is performed for God's satisfaction and it is in the service of God's creatures, it can be regarded as worship, righteous deed, and worthy deed. Dedication is when a person prioritizes the Islamic community and other Muslims to herself. The Almighty God says in the Quran that "And that there is not for man except that [good] for which he strives" (Al-Najm, Versus 39). Some hadiths have mentioned these three concepts.

Muhammad (peace be upon him, PBUH) has greatly emphasized halal income. He says that "Haram food deprives a person of faith" (Al-Maez Adadiah: 153). "The purest human food is through (halal) income and [man] should know that his progenies will come from his business" (Shahab-al-Akhbar: 360). "Pursuing halal income is the obligation for every Muslim man and Muslim woman" (Bihar-al-Anwar, 103: 9). "Working for halal income is obligatory on every Muslim man and women" (Jame-al-Akhbar, p. 389, Hadith 1079). "Blessed is the one whose income is halal, whose interior is pure, whose appearance is dignified, and whose harassment has not reached any of God's people" (Shahab-al-Akhbar: 307). "A person who is not ashamed of earning halal income (from any job), his life will be cheap, his mind will be at ease, and his family will be in blessings and comfort" (Tahfa-al-Aqool: 57). Some sins are not forgiven by praying and charity. It was asked, "O Messenger of Allah! So what causes their forgiveness? He answered, 'Seriousness and effort in earning livelihood'" (Mostadrak-al-Wasa'il, 13: 13). Regarding God satisfaction, it is said that "To be satisfied with God satisfaction, a person should not be dissatisfied with his Lord (God), whether he is living a good life or not a good life and is not pleased with his good deeds, even few good deeds" (Bihar-al-Anwar, 69: 373).

Regarding halal income, Imam Ali says in Nahj-al-Balaghah, "The man deprives himself of halal income due to impatience and does not receive more than his destined income" (Sharh Nahj-al-Balaghah, 3: 160). "Whoever earns wealth and property through non-halal way, he will spend it for

non-right” (Jame Ahadith-al-Shia, 22: 681). “The purity of the heart is the result of a halal meal” (Mavaez-e Adadiah: 23). “Work and finish it and be persistent, then be patient and pious. Indeed you have an end, so reach that end (Paradise)” (Nahj-al-Balaghah: 111). “The purist business is halal income” (Ghurur-al-Hikam, 2: 1263). “A healthy and unemployed person who does neither a worldly job nor a hereafter job is in the wrath of God” (Sharh Nahj-al-Balaghah, 17: 146). “Be pleased with God’s pleasure and live happily and comfortably as a result” (Mizan-al-Hikmah, 4: 147). Regarding impacts, the Hadith says, “One cannot achieve God’s obedience unless he tries the best” (Jamaluddin Khansari’s Explanation of Ghurur-al-Hikam, 7: 219). “The value of man is in his efforts, not his wealth” (Ghurur al-Hikam wa Durar al-Kalim: 447).

Imam Sadegh says, “Haram income has (adverse) impacts on the children (and makes their guidance difficult)” (Wasa’il-al-Shi’ah, 12: 53). “Do not give up earning a halal income because it will help you in your obedience” (Wasa’il-al-Shi’ah, 12: 24).

All these hadiths show the attention paid by the religious scholars to perfection and merit of work, which is today called productivity, optimization, and compliance with work standards. So, the three concepts can be defined here as follows:

- Halal income: doing rightful and proper work considering what God says
- God satisfaction: doing work for God satisfaction and by relying on God
- Dedication: performing duties without expecting appreciation and by relying on God and his commands.

Based on the quantitative results, career stability and halal income are two top priority career anchors among the NIOC employees from all demographic groups. The next ranks were found to be for functional competencies and career-life balance. These results can contribute to designing career models and other human resource strategies in NIOC.

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Appendix 1

The coding of qualitative data extracted from the interviews on career anchors

Anchor	Concept	Statement mentioned	Interview code
Geographical stability	Changing work place	I am not willing to change my place of work and it is important to me.	DN2
		I am not willing to change my place of work because the requirements of my private life are more important to me.	DN3
		Although I have an on/off-basis job, I do not accept to change it due to my personal life plans.	DN12
	Mission	The unpleasant part of my job is when I go on a mission.	DN21
		Missions to other places are not pleasant for my family, especially if I have to stay overnight.	DN5-DN23
		Although the mission income is attractive to me, it's hard for me to stay overnight for more than a day.	DN10-DN27
Being challenging	Being successful	When my work is enjoyable for me, it is done without any problems and successfully.	DN15
		I enjoy following a task or project until its completion.	DN1
	Hard and challenging work	The fun of a work is to be a little hard and thoughtful.	DN17
		Having a challenging job is more important than getting a managerial position.	DN14
		I am looking for challenging jobs that require new skills and knowledge of new factors.	DN15
		Having a challenging job and facing new issues are of my intellectual concerns.	DN11-DN25
		I'd like my career path to be challenging in the future.	DN4-DN30
The construction projects department has more variety and challenges, so I'd like to work in this department and be an expert.	DN3		

Job diversity	The best moments of my work were when I had a variety of jobs.	DN5	
	I'd like my work to be more diverse in the future.	DN6	
	I'd like to work in integrated, planning or project management departments since they have more variety.	DN16	
	My motivation for changing my unit of work was to diversify my work and get acquaintance with another type of work.	DN12-DN26	
Cooperation in other affairs	I am interested in collaborating on challenging work in other fields.	DN13	
	I'd like to be used in other departments as well.	DN14-DN23	
	I accept project proposals in other departments.	DN7	
Resolving crises	I do not like the place where work is routine. Resolving crises is more enjoyable for me despite the high volume of work and stress.	DN9-DN29	
	My job is to enjoyable when I resolve a work crisis and complete a project.	DN8	
	I enjoy solving a problem that can take months, as well as solving a crisis.	DN13	
Managerial competencies	Gaining a managerial position	I love being a manager.	DN3
		I like to guide others.	DN10
	Promotion to a higher position	My highest goal in my career path is to take a managerial position.	DN19-DN30
		My motivation for continuing my education was to get a managerial position.	DN1
Promotion to a higher position	It is more important for me to be promoted in my professional field.	DN14	
	My motivation for transferring to the headquarters is the possibility of continuing my education and promotion, even if it is not related to my specialty.	DN20	

		I was looking for a promotion by doing things and facing issues.	DN18
Ability of managing others		I can easily identify experts and use their expertise to manage affairs.	DN14
		I am capable, even in areas that have nothing to do with my work. I have good communication power and I have the ability to use the expertise of others.	DN12-DN24
		I enjoy my job when I can manage a number of people.	DN2
		In my future career path, I'd like to be in jobs and positions that require leadership, guidance, decision-making, control, and evaluation.	DN5
Freedom of action	Respect for expert opinion	I'd like to give an expert opinion at work and they respect my expert opinion.	DN12
		Due to my expertise, my expert opinions are accepted even if it is against the opinion of the manager.	DN18
		If I give an expert opinion on an issue, my opinion will not change.	DN14
		It is unexpected and unpleasant that my expert opinion is not applied. I'd like my personality and opinion to be respected.	DN14
		For the future of my career, I'd like to be in a higher position so that a higher official respects my opinions and I have freedom of action.	DN13
	Resistance against unrealistic expectations	I'd like my comments not to be forced by the manager.	DN6
		I do not like to have unprincipled requests and unrealistic expectations by the manager when I'm giving an expert opinion.	DN14
		I did not sign anything with a threat or under force.	DN12
		My work is unpleasant when they take away my freedom of action and independence, and I'm wanted to be used as a cover for their work.	DN25
		My job is unpleasant for me when managerial decisions made by people I do not accept are applied to the work. It is not pleasant that managerial decisions are made without regard to expert opinions and relying on authority.	DN17

Independence and freedom of action		It is important to have freedom of action at work.	DN3
		It is very pleasant when I have independence in my work.	DN13
		I have come to this department because I have more freedom of action	DN2
		Promotion is important, but not as important as having freedom of action. I had more freedom of action in specialized executive units in affiliated companies.	DN18
		I cannot ignore the freedom of action and independence in my work.	DN19-DN22
		I would like to be in a higher position to have more freedom of action.	DN17
Authority of decision-making		It is not pleasant at all that you have no right to choose a career at all.	DN1
		I would like to make decisions for me; rather, decisions are made for me.	DN19
		I planned the future path in my job for positions that require leadership and decision making.	DN17
Authority-responsibility proportionality		I would like to choose my own ways of doing things.	DN5
		I would like to have the authority to act in accordance with my responsibilities	DN7
Career-life balance	Private life priority	Authorities, responsibilities, and expectations must be proportionate.	DN3
		The unpleasant part of my job is when I go on a mission because it conflicts with my life and family responsibilities and my children become impatient.	DN12
		My motivation for attending the headquarters is that I can more easily meet the requirements of my private life than the operational departments and on/off-basis jobs.	DN8
		I am not willing to change my place of residence because the requirements of my private life are more important to me.	DN9-DN23
	My private life is my first priority to the extent that I do not want to allow my private life to be damaged.	DN24	

		Although my work is repetitive, I can better plan my personal life with it.	DN14
	Career-life balance	Creating a priority between work and life is one of my priorities.	DN11
		It's important for me to be able to balance the role of wife and mother with my job role.	DN6
		It is a pleasure for me to fulfill my obligations to my family despite the hard work.	DN2
	Reducing work pressure and stress	One of the reasons I was transferred from the previous department to this department is that the previous department has put a lot of work pressure, stress, and responsibilities on me, which affected my personal life.	DN10
		What I plan for my career future is a carefree and stress-free job.	DN13
		With work pressure and stress, I do not have the opportunity to take care of and implement my personal plans.	DN16
		The pressure and stress of my previous job made it impossible for me to take my family on a trip and have fun, so I changed it.	DN19
Economic stability	Job security	One of the reasons for turning to NIOC is job permanence and its security.	DN2
		The best part of being hired in NIOC is the permanence of job.	DN5
	Economic security	My future economic security is important to me, so in the first years of service I started working in operational and on/off-basis areas.	DN8
		My motivation for serving in deprived areas is to achieve economic stability.	DN11
		I endure being away from my family and the problems of the platform in order to achieve economic security.	DN14
		It's very hard for me that in recent years, my income raise has fallen behind other organization so that it has even decreased in some cases.	DN17
		It is unpleasant that every year some of our income benefits are deducted.	DN20

Creativity and innovation	Reluctance to do repetitive work	I do not like completely routine work.	DN25	
		In this department, I am constantly faced with new issues and it is enjoyable for me.	DN3	
	Entrepreneurship	I enjoy when I start a new and non-repetitive work.	DN6	
		A way for success and progress is to present a new plan or idea.	DN9	
Functional competency	Relevance to the field of study	In my work, I have established new procedures to satisfy my colleagues and the clients.	DN12	
		I enjoy when I write and implement a new program.	DN15	
		I enjoy my job because it is related to my field of study.	DN18	
		It is more important for me to do specialized work than to get more benefits.	DN29	
	Professional commitment	Relevance to the field of study	It was not enjoyable when my job was not related to my field of study.	DN1
			I accepted the new position because it was related to my field of study.	DN4-DN30
		Learning	The relevance of the field of study and the type of activity in the workplace has had a great impact on my vitality.	DN7
			I was offered a department management position but I did not accept because there were people who were more competent than me.	DN10
Professional commitment	Learning	I avoid being promoted or working in a job unrelated to my work and educational background.	DN13	
		The organization only chants that it values its human resources. The type of work and professional background is much more important to me than my organization.	DN16	
		The organization did not make me eager to come to work; rather, my responsibility has encouraged me to do my work.	DN19	
	Learning	I would like to have my skills updated and used where I have the expertise so I can be really helpful.	DN23	

		I am eager to increase my ability to use my knowledge and learn and improve my technical competencies.	DN2
		I do not think much about my organizational position in my future job, but I would like to continue my education and increase my qualifications and keep my level of technical knowledge up to date.	DN7
		I feel more accepted as my specialized knowledge increases.	DN13
Honest service to others	Usefulness	One of the honors of my job is that I was able to be consistently productive and useful.	DN18
		I enjoy the feeling of being helpful and useful to others.	DN3-DN27
		People's need for being served is one of the blessings of God, so I like to be useful.	DN8
		I like too always be useful and effective.	DN13
	Sense of service	Sometimes hard and intensive work increases in the operational regions, but it is enjoyable because I know it is about the national production cycle and serving our fellow people.	DN18-DN21
		I am happy to feel useful to others and nation.	DN3
	Sense of responsibility	I am satisfied with my job when I can do what I can honestly and have a sense of duty.	DN9
		I love my job and I enjoy it when it is sincerely in the service of others with no expectation.	DN15
Identity	Professional position	My job reflects my position in my profession.	DN1
		Being a pioneer in production and creating processes and facilities that were previously imported is a good professional aspect for us.	DN7
		I am proud of myself for my specialized activities in creating new projects and preventing the waste of the national currency.	DN13
	Significance	I enjoy my work when I know what my role is in the performance of the department.	DN19
		I know well where my organizational position and my profession are in organizational strategies and I am proud of that.	DN5-DN26

		I work with pleasure and fame in my profession because I know how useful I am in the value chain.	DN11
Halal income	Blessing in life and work	I tend to work hard to do what is expected of me to stick to the impact of income blessing on my family.	DN17
		I try to be patient in performing the duties of the organization to keep my halal income.	DN3
		By earning halal income in my chosen career path, I maintain my faith.	DN9
		By earning a halal income, I reach peace of heart.	DN15
		The result of earning halal income is effective for the rest of my life.	DN21
		I believe that by earning a halal income, I do not harm other people in the community.	DN3
		I guarantee my Hereafter by trying to earn a halal income.	DN10
		If I know that earning a higher income will lead to more prosperity for my family, but my children's future may be endangered, I will give up a higher income.	DN17
	Religious principles	Work is a form of worship, so I consider it obligatory for me to earn a halal income.	DN4
		I believe that earning a halal income is worship.	DN11
		I guarantee my Hereafter by trying to earn a halal income.	DN18
		The health of my income is more important to me than the amount of my income.	DN5
	Caring ethics	Promotion and advancement in the career path should not lead to ignoring ethical principles. The money I get must be halal.	DN12
		I am not willing to violate beliefs and moral principles for the sake of career advancement.	DN19
		When someone who is not competent in something accepts its responsibility, it is as if he has usurped it.	DN25

		It is important to me that the revenue from a position is halal.	DN1-DN6-DN29
		The claim of being a Muslim and doing anything to advance in the organization are contradictory. One should also think about the answer of giving back in the Hereafter life.	DN13
		Respect for the rights of others is important to me in earning and progressing.	DN20
God satisfaction	God satisfaction	Work is worship, so the most important thing for me is that it pleases God.	DN7
		I am not willing to weaken my personality and do anything to gain a managerial position and upgrade my personality.	DN14
		For the sake of God and the success of this organization, I do all kinds of duties and job assignments correctly.	DN1
		What matters is the intention of the individual. When God pleasure is the basis for my plans, choosing or not choosing a position and my motivation and satisfaction will be affected.	DN8
Dedication	Towards organization	If my working conditions are not in accordance with my intentions, I will take it easy for the obedience of God's command.	DN15
		I preserve my human value by sacrificing my own desires in the organization.	DN2
		I trust God in times of job stalemate.	DN9
	Towards coworkers	If I know that someone is more deserved for promotion than me, I recommend him/her to my boss for promotion.	DN16
		I prefer the demands of my colleagues to mine as far as it is in the area of organizational demands.	DN3
		I do not expect appreciation for performing tasks (tasks assigned to other people).	DN10
Career stability	In terms of field of education	It is a pleasure for me to spend my career in activities that are both diverse and consistent within my field of study.	DN17

	It is important for me to record the process of my career advancement in line with a general area of specialization, but in view of the variety of actions.	DN14
In terms of work group	I like all my organizational positions to be in the same job group during my career.	DN4
	I do not like working sporadically in different job areas.	DN11
	All positions and jobs I have had so far have been in the same area, and that satisfies me.	DN18
	I can do other work related to my own work.	DN5
	It is not acceptable that there is a lot of job transfer in different areas within the organization.	DN12

Appendix 2

Data frequency

Anchor	Frequency		Anchor	Frequency	Ratio of frequency to total
Geographical stability	6	0.042	Functional competency	13	0.090
Being challenging	18	0.125	Hosetly sense of service	8	0.056
Managerial competencies	11	0.076	Identity	6	0.042
Freedom of action	22	0.153	Halal income	18	0.125
Career-life balance	12	0.083	God satisfaction	4	0.028
Economic stability	7	0.049	Dedication	6	0.042

Creativity and innovation	6	0.042	Career stability	7	0.049
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Appendix 3

Ranking of career anchors in terms of demographic variables

Anchor	Mean rank	Gender		Educational level					Education type			
		Female	Male	Diploma	Associate degree	Bachelor's degree	Master's degree	Ph.D. or higher	Non-technical & non-medical	Semi-technical	Technical	Medical & healthcare
Career stability	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1
Halal income	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	2
Functional competencies	3	4	3	8	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Career-life balance	4	3	4	3	3	3	5	5	4	4	4	5
Creativity and innovation	5	6	5	12	11	6	4	4	6	5	5	4
Economic stability	6	5	6	4	5	5	6	6	5	6	6	6
Identity	7	8	7	6	6	7	8	11	7	8	7	9
God satisfaction	8	7	8	7	8	10	7	7	8	10	8	7
Honest service	9	9	9	9	10	8	10	9	10	7	9	8
Dedication	10	10	10	11	9	9	11	12	9	9	10	12
Freedom of action	11	11	12	10	12	11	12	10	12	12	11	10

Diversity and being challenging	12	13	11	14	13	12	9	8	13	11	12	11
Managerial competencies	13	12	13	5	7	13	13	13	11	13	13	13
Geographical stability	14	14	14	13	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14



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